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ARMY MEDICAL LIBRARY

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ISSUED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

CURRENT LIST INDEXES, 1947

Publication of indexes to issues of the Current List for the last five months of 1947 has been delayed due to shortage of personnel and change of editorship. The desirability of early publication of these indexes is fully appreciated and arrangements have been made for their preparation and publication at an early date. The tentative plan is to publish the August 1947 index separately, the September and October indexes combined, and the November and December indexes combined.

Although the probable date of publication cannot be stated, this work has been given a high priority, in order that subscribers to the Current List will have complete indexes for all of the 1947 issues.

No. 20 of Volume 13, distributed late in January, was the last issue for the calendar year 1947.

MEETING OF HISTORICAL MEDICINE COMMITTEE

An informal meeting of the Committee on Historical Medicine, Honorary Consultants to the Army Medical Library, was held at the Cleveland Branch of the Army Medical Library on January 9. Present were the Chairman, Dr. Henry R. Viets, Colonel Joseph H. McNinch, Mr. Thomas J. Holmes, Mr. Scott Adams, Dr. William Jerome Wilson, and Dr. Dorothy M. Schullian. Cataloging of the sixteenth century books of the Army Medical Library was discussed and it was decided to publish such a catalog as a continuation of the catalog of the fifteenth century books now ready for publication.

Another subject discussed was the possibility of moving the Cleveland Branch back to Washington. It is recognized that this collection naturally belongs in Washington and should be transferred as soon as a proper place for it can be found.

AML CLASSIFICATION

The publication of the Army Medical Library Classification which was scheduled for early in 1948 has been temporarily postponed.

VISITORS AT CLEVELAND

Dr. Henry R. Viets, neurologist and lecturer at Harvard University, Librarian of the Boston Medical Library, and an Honorary Consultant to the Army Medical Library, spoke at the annual meeting of the Cleveland Medical Library Association on Friday, January 16. His subject was "A Roving Commission—The Doctor Calls on Some of his Friends." He gave an unusually vivid word picture of Sir William Osler making his daily visits to the London hospital. Dr. Viets also related personal recollections of his long stay with Arnold C. Klebs, famous bibliographer in medical and scientific history, at Nyon, Switzerland.

Dr. J. P. Bantug, of Manila, P. I., a member of the Bureau of Health and of the faculty of the University of Sto. Tomás, visited the History of Medicine Division and examined a number of the rare books and also the Philippine documents in the Library's collection. He is spending two months in study at the Cleveland Health Museum and hopes to establish in the Philippine Islands a health museum on the same general model.

GORGAS EXHIBIT

A third exhibit in the series Famous Men of Army Medicine is now on display. The subject is William Crawford Gorgas, Army Surgeon General from 1914 to 1918, whose ten years of work beginning in the early 1900's accomplished a marvelous triumph of sanitation and made possible the building of the Panama Canal. As Chief Health Officer, he applied against the mosquito-borne diseases which made the Isthmus a pesthole the same measures that had previously given him such success in Cuba. His reputation extended until he was generally regarded as the world's foremost sanitary expert.

Numerous honors were conferred upon General Gorgas. He is the subject of an interesting permanent exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

NEW LIBRARY RECEIVES THE INDEX-CATALOGUE

The International College of Surgeons, now located in its new permanent Lake Shore Drive home in Chicago, has established a World Surgical Library for general world use. The new library expects to grow from donations of special collections left by famous surgeons and others.

In order to assist in building up this new focus of medical bibliography, the Army Medical Library has donated to the new institution a set of the Fourth Series of the Index-Catalogue.

DR. SCHULLIAN VISITS WASHINGTON

Dr. Dorothy M. Schullian, Curator of Rare Books at the History of Medicine Division, spent the week of January 19 to 23 at the Army Medical Library. During her stay in Washington, she examined the large pamphlet collection to determine whether the older material should be sent to Cleveland, and also surveyed the serial collection to select material for restoration and binding at the Cleveland binding studio.

Dr. Schullian was a special guest at the meeting of the Biological Sciences Group, Special Libraries Association, on the evening of January 20. Her week in Washington also permitted her to call at the Library of Congress and at the Welch Medical Library in nearby Baltimore.

The members of the Library staff were grateful for the opportunity to get acquainted which was afforded by Dr. Schullian's visit.

THE GREAT HERBAL (PÊN TS'AO KANG MU)

The Library has acquired a 19th century edition of Li Shih-chên's famous Chinese "Great Herbal" (Pên Ts'ao Kang Mu), in 52 volumes. The original of this work was published in 1596, shortly after the death of its compiler who is said to have labored on it for almost thirty years. The introduction to the work states that in his will Li Shih-chên commissioned his son to submit it to the emperor Shên Tsung who thereupon authorized its publication.

Although it is commonly translated as "The Herbal", the Pên Ts'ao Kang Mu is actually a complete materia medica. Three of its supplementary volumes consist entirely of very fine woodcuts illustrating the animals, plants, and minerals which form the basic substances of all the drugs described in the work itself. The other additional volumes contain a preface, an introduction, and an index of diseases.

The idea of the Pên Ts'ao is of great antiquity and the first such "Herbal" is traditionally ascribed to Shên Nung, the Divine Husbandman and God of Medicine, a legendary emperor who is said to have reigned from 2737 to 2697 B. C. By the time when Li Shih-chên began his task, about five hundred different Pên Ts'ao had been compiled. His work represents a critical study of 1578 prescriptions contained in the earlier works on this topic to which he added 358 new drugs, including those derived from tobacco and opium. Its antiquity does not detract from the present value of the book and Chinese physicians are still in the habit of consulting it.

BUSTS OF WORLD WAR II SURGEONS GENERAL

The bust of Major General James C. Magee, Army Surgeon General 1939-43, has been recast in bronze and now adorns the Director's mantelshelf. The bronze bust of Major General Norman T. Kirk, Army Surgeon General 1943-1947, has been a prized possession of the Library for about a year.

JOINT RESEARCH PROJECT

Research work being done in Library Hall includes an extensive joint project of the Army, Veterans Administration, and American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons on splints, braces, and prosthetic devices, which is being carried on under the supervision of Captain Burke M. Snow, Medical Corps, Officer in Charge of the Limb and Brace Shop at Walter Reed General Hospital.

STAFF ACTIVITIES

In an effort to stimulate leadership qualities in supervisory personnel of the Army Medical Library, bi-weekly meetings of supervisors have been inaugurated. Mr. Charles A. Roos has been elected Chairman. Supervisory problems will be discussed at these meetings and it is believed that such discussion will be of benefit to all participants. The meetings will be attended by representatives of the Employee Utilization Section of the Surgeon General's Office, who will be ready to participate in discussions and answer questions which may arise pertaining to Department of the Army and Civil Service regulations, policies, and procedures. The Library has also been invited to send representatives to similar meetings held in the Office of the Surgeon General.

Mr. Scott Adams attended a meeting, held in New York City on January 19, to plan a successor organization to the American Book Center for War Devastated Libraries.

Miss Marjorie Vivian, serials reviser in the Descriptive Cataloging Section, is a member of the Serials Subcommittee of the Committee on Descriptive Cataloging of the ALA Division of Cataloging and Classification. She attended a committee meeting in New York on January 2, and on January 17 she presided at the meeting of the Maryland, Virginia, and District of Columbia Regional Group of Catalogers. The Rules for Descriptive Cataloging in the Library of Congress were discussed at both meetings.

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